

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

Trail King Industries, Inc.

South Dakota Manufacturing Extension Partnership

Dakota MEP Leads Trail King in Order Process Kaizen

Client Profile:

Trail King Industries, Inc., founded in 1974, is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Carlisle Companies, Inc., a diversified global company. Trail King has trailers to serve a wide variety of applications for markets as diverse as construction, agriculture, transportation, waste and recycling, and specialized hauling. They compete in national and global trailer markets. Trail King's facilities in Mitchell, South Dakota provide state-of-the-art production capabilities for a workforce of 470 people.

Situation:

Trail King Industries had acquired the Brookville, Pennsylvania and West Fargo, North Dakota trailer companies in prior years, but had not consolidated the trailer order process. Each site processed customer order information in a different and unique manner. This information was shared across the different facilities for engineering, purchasing, and production of these units. These different order processes created a lot of questions and loop backs, causing delays in lead time and incorrect interpretations of order specifications. Through the Lean Bronze Certification Program (LECP), Trail King realized the value of the Lean process and continuous improvement. Dakota MEP, a NIST MEP network affiliate, was contacted to help Trail King began their Lean journey by leading them in a Kaizen on their trailer order process.

Solution:

Dakota MEP created a cross-functional team with representation from each site and began the process of educating the team on the fundamentals of Lean and Value Stream Mapping (VSM). Dakota MEP created a VSM for each site enabling everyone to see the differences and bottlenecks in each site's process. Once the issues in each process were identified, the team brainstormed and created one future state order process for all sites. In total, 12 Kaizen opportunities within the order process were identified. With the assistance of Dakota MEP, Trail King conducted a Kaizen on the Order Build information. This Kaizen consolidated the different trailer order information into one standard 'Order Build Sheet' for all locations. It provided them with the tools to standardize this process and the ability to apply measurements to the process. As a result of Dakota MEP's assistance, the number of days for a trailer order to be processed through the system decreased from 41 days to 12 days. This Kaizen provided the foundation to apply continuous improvement efforts to the complete order process.

Results:

* Reduced order processing time by 71 percent.

Testimonial:

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"The education and Kaizen leadership that Dakota MEP provided to Trail King has been a great tool we have leveraged in our Lean journey."

Mike Voigt, Vice President of Carlisle Operating System